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in that direction, and turning suddenly round a clump of copsewood, began to climb an old mimosa tree which stood at the one side of it. The raging beast, however, was too quick for him. Bounding forward with a roar, which my informant described as being one of the most frightful sounds he ever heard, he caught the unfortunate man with his terrible horns, just as he had nearly escaped his reach, and tossed him into the air with such force that the body fell, dreadfully mangled, into a cleft of the tree. The buffalo ran round the tree once or twice, apparently looking for the man, until weakened with loss of blood he again sunk on his knees. The rest of the party, recovering from their confusion, then came up and despatched him, though too late to save their comrade, whose body was hanging in the tree quite dead."

AMERICAN PENITENTIARIES.

In some recent numbers of our Journal we enabled our readers to judge of the present state of society in the United States. We have heard much of the improved condition of their prisons and prison discipline—the following extract from the "Report of William Crawford, Esq. on the Penitentiaries of the United States," printed by order of the House of Commons, will serve as a specimen of the way in which brother Jonathan manages these affairs. That solitary confinement is productive, in many instances, of great benefit, has been established beyond the possibility of a doubt. It is evident, however, that great circumspection is required in the mode of administering this species of punishment.

PHILADELPHIAN PENITENTIARY.

"This penitentiary is situated about a mile from the city of Philadelphia. The site occupies about twelve acres. It is built of stone, and surrounded by a wall thirty feet in height. Every room is vaulted and fire-proof. At each angle of the boundary wall is a tower for the purpose of overlooking the establishment. In the centre is a circular building, or observatory, from which several corridors radiate: they are under complete inspection. The cells are ranged on each side of the corridors, in the wall of which is a small aperture and iron door to each cell: through this aperture the meals of the prisoner are handed to him without his seeing the officer, and he may at all times be thus inspected without his knowledge. Other openings are provided for the purposes of ventilation and warmth. Heated air is conducted by flues from stoves under the corridors. In the arched ceiling of each cell is a window for the admission of light. The cells are eleven feet nine inches long, seven feet six inches wide, and sixteen feet high to the top of the arched ceiling. The cells on the ground floor have double doors leading into a yard, eighteen feet by eight feet, in which the convict is allowed to take exercise for an hour daily. The walls of the yard are eleven feet high. Prisoners are not allowed to walk at the same time in adjoining yards; and when in the yards, are inspected by a watchman placed for that purpose in the tower of the observatory. * * * On the admission of a convict he is taken into an office at the entrance of the penitentiary, and subjected to the usual course of examination. His person is cleansed, and he is clothed in a uniform. He is then blindfolded and conducted to his cell. On his way thither he is for a short time detained in the observatory, where he is admonished by the warden as to the necessity of implicit obedience to the regulations. On arriving in his cell, the hood is removed, and he is left alone. There he may remain for years, perhaps for life, without seeing any human being but the inspectors, the warden and his officers, and perhaps occasionally one of the official visitors of the prison. For the first day or two, the convict is not allowed to have even a Bible, nor is any employment given to him for at least a week, a period during which he is the object of the warden's special observation. The prisoner soon petitions for an occupation. It is not, however, until solitude appears to have effectually subdued him, that employment of any kind is introduced into his cell. * * *

"So strict is this seclusion, that I found, on conversing with the prisoners, that they were not aware of the exis-

tence of the cholera, which had but a few months before prevailed in Philadelphia."

SYSTEM OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AT AUBURN AND ELSEWHERE.

"A trial of solitary confinement, day and night, without labour, was made at Auburn in the year 1822, for ten months, upon eighty of the most hardened convicts. They were each confined in a cell only seven feet long, three feet and a half wide, and seven feet high. They were on no account permitted to leave the cell, during that long period, on any occasion, not even for the purposes of nature. They had no means of obtaining any change of air, nor opportunities of taking exercise. The most disastrous consequences were naturally the result.

"Several persons became insane; health was impaired, and life endangered. The discipline of the prison at that period was one of unmixed severity. There was no moral nor religious instruction of any kind communicated within its walls, nor consolation administered by which the convict was enabled to bear up against the cruelty of this treatment. Nor was a trial of the same description, which took place in the State of Maine, conducted under more advantageous circumstances. The night-rooms or cells at this prison are literally pits entered from the top by a ladder, through an aperture about two feet square. The opening is secured by an iron grate, used as a trap-door; the only other orifice is one at the bottom, about an inch and a half in diameter, for the admission of warm air from underneath. The cells are eight feet nine inches wide, and nine feet eight inches high. Their gloom is indescribable. The diet, during confinement, was bread and water only. Thus immured, and without any occupation, it will excite no surprise to learn that a man who had been sentenced to pass seventy days in one of these miserable pits hung himself after four days' imprisonment. Another, condemned to sixty days, also committed suicide on the twenty-fourth day. It became necessary to remove four others, who were unable to endure this cruelty, from the cell to the hospital repeatedly, before the expiration of the sentence. It is said that similar experiments have been made in Virginia, and that various diseases, terminating in death, were the result. The cells in which the prisoners were confined have been since disused: they are, in fact, dungeons, being on the basement story, and so dark as to require a lamp in visiting them. In damp weather the water stands in drops on the walls. The cells were not warmed at any season of the year. A prisoner's feet were actually frozen during his confinement."

Such is the system pursued by the "wise men of the West," to work reformation in the minds of rational beings!

AN ADVENTURE.

"It is many years since a gentleman happened to take up a night's lodging in a room which overlooked a church-yard, situated in the midst of a small town. Whether he was a stranger, a visitor, or a resident there, I cannot, at this moment, call to mind; nor do I mention the name of the town, for obvious reasons. The gentleman was young, strong, and by no means visionary—so that if he looked out of his window before he retired to rest at midnight, it was most probably to speculate upon the weather. Once having looked, however, he could not withdraw his gaze—his eyes were rivetted upon the church—for he perceived, to his great surprise, that a light was burning within it, casting a dull gleam from the windows which surround the altar. He watched for a few moments in silence, and, it may be supposed, with as much awe as curiosity, until he was certain that there could be no deceit—for the light remained burning in the same place. He was resolved to ascertain what so singular an appearance could mean; but he would not go alone—perhaps he durst not—perhaps he wished for the company of other witnesses besides himself. One or two neighbours were called up, and the keys of the church-yard procured, after some delay. There burned the light still; and, though their eyes were anxiously fixed upon it as the gate creaked upon its rusty hinges to admit them, it neither faded nor moved. They approached the building—the windows were so high that